

Day-Mutual Mine
Burnt Tree Fork
Spring Canyon
Old Mutual Townsite
Helper vicinity
Carbon County
Utah

HAER No. UT-45

HAER
UTAH,
4-HELPER,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
P. O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

HAER
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Day-Mutual Mine

HAER No. UT-45

Location: SW/NW/NE/NE Section 12, T13S-R8E
Burnt Tree Fork, Spring Canyon, Old Mutual Townsite,
about 6-1/2 miles west of Helper, Carbon County, Utah

UTM: 12.502460E.4395990N
Quad: Standardville, Utah

Date of Construction: ca. 1940

Present Owner: John, Nick & Gene D. Pappas
856 N. 3rd E.
Price, Utah 84501

Present Use: Coal mining

Significance: The mine tipple is associated with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of our history, i.e., early 20th century coal mining in Utah and the western United States. The tipple is an integral part of the overall Mutual mining operation as it evolved through the 20th century. It is an example of a mine support facility, designed for a particular function and constructed with cheap, locally unavailable materials. It is one of the few surviving examples of wooden tipples remaining in the Spring Canyon district. The site retains integrity of setting and physical integrity and therefore conveys feeling and association with its period of historical significance.

Historian: Robert G. Rosenberg, Historical Consultant
A. Dudley Gardner, Principal Investigator
Western Wyoming College

August 1988

I. HISTORY

The Mutual Coal Company opened a coal mine on the northeast side of the Burnt Tree Fork of Spring Canyon in February 1921. The land was acquired by state and government lease and from lands formerly leased by the Carbon Fuel Company and the Morton Coal Company. The company was formed by a group of Salt Lake City businessmen. The president and general manager was W. H. Homer, Jr., the vice president was W. A. Coughanour, the secretary-treasurer was J. Edward Taylor, and the mine superintendent was Albert Shaw. The Mutual Coal Company was a public corporation and, by 1925, had 8,486 stockholders who were entitled to discounts on coal purchases.¹

The Mutual Mine was located about one-half mile northwest of Rains. The mine was on the Subseam No. 2, the second coal bed underlying the Castlegate bed in the Blackhawk Formation of the Mesaverde Group of the Cretaceous Period. The drift mine developed a seam of coal that averaged five to six feet in thickness. By November 15, 1921, the mine had already produced 63,076 tons of coal. The mine was developed by the room and pillar method that held up the roof. The coal was undercut with machines and shot down. Horses and two electric locomotives were used to haul coal in the mine. From the portal, a 3200-foot incline tram delivered the cars to a tippie at the railroad at the mouth of the canyon, where the coal was cleaned, sorted, and screened for market.²

During the early to mid-1920s, the Mutual Coal Company developed three mines, located in close proximity on both sides of the canyon. All developed the same coal seams and were numbered from one to three. According to the State Coal Mine Inspector, the Mutual Coal Company produced 171,024 tons of coal in 1924-25 and 188,714 tons in 1925-1926. Production continued at a slightly reduced rate, with 155,759 tons in 1928. However, output began to fall dramatically, with the onset of the Great Depression. Only 127,791 tons of coal were produced between January 1, 1929 and June 30, 1930.³

In addition to the sagging national economy, labor problems contributed to decreased production. Disgruntled Mutual miners went on strike against the company three times in 1933. The strikes were a result of legitimate grievances against the company and a fight for dominance between the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and the National Miners Union (NMU). The latter union was formed by disenchanting UMWA members in 1928. While the NMU was generally successful at Mutual in all three strikes, the UMWA ultimately gained dominance of all mine workers at Mutual and throughout Carbon County by the end of 1934. Although labor problems gradually subsided at the mine, production from July 1, 1934 to June 30, 1935 fell to only 97,671 tons of coal, and to only 74,625 tons of coal from July 1, 1936 to June 30, 1937.⁴

The Mutual Coal Company ceased operations in 1938, but several smaller operations were established in the immediate vicinity during and after World War II. The first was the Day Mine or Day-Mutual Mine, which was established by Wayne Day of Rains, Utah, in 1940 or 1941. The Day Mine was described as a small two or three-man operation that took advantage of the increased coal demand during World War II. The mine was located on the steep southwest slope of the Burnt Tree Fork of Spring Canyon, only about 1,000 feet northwest of the Mutual Mine workings and directly across from the town of Mutual. Day built a wooden tippie to load the coal onto trucks. The tippie still stands at the mine site. The mine appears to have been productive throughout World War II and for a short period of time afterward. An estimated 157,913 tons of coal were produced during the life of the mine. Maps of underground mine workings reveal that the Day-Mutual Mine worked the same coal deposits as the old Mutual Mines, and filled a small unworked gap between the old Mutual workings and those of the Vulcan Fuel Company Mine to the south in the Left Fork of Spring Canyon.⁵

The third operation in the Mutual area was the Western Coal Mining Company, organized by George Schultz, former mine superintendent at the Liberty Mine, and his son, Harold. The main portal of the Western Mine was located on the same side of the canyon as the Day-Mutual Mine and only about 600 feet to the northwest. Operations began here between 1944 and 1946 and continued through the 1950s and mid-1960s. The Western Mine built a truck haul road along the old incline tramway of the Mutual Mine to the old Mutual tippie located at the mouth of the canyon. Overall production of the Western Mine is unknown, but it was the last coal mining operation in the immediate vicinity of Mutual.⁶

The town of Mutual was constructed by the Mutual Coal Company to house and serve the miners. There were twenty-six small wood frame cottages in Mutual in 1921. It is likely that the company used readily-available standardized coal camp building plans for constructing the Mutual living quarters. The company probably used its own employees to lay out and build the structures to fit the confines of the canyon topography. However, no records or plans have been located concerning the construction history of Mutual. Numerous other dwellings were constructed as needed on both sides of the access road that exists today along the Burnt Tree Fork of Spring Canyon, from the two-story stone Mutual Store near the canyon forks to the Western Mine. General Land Office survey plats from 1925 show the "Morton Mining Camp" located on the northeast side of the canyon and north of the Mutual town site near the confluence of Clochetto Canyon with the Burnt Tree Fork of Spring Canyon.

The Mutual Store was independently owned and run by John Columbo and is inscribed with the date of August 18, 1926. It is an outstanding example

of the fine Italian stone masonry, characteristic of the Spring Canyon area. The Mutual Store was the focal point of community activity. The amusement hall on the second floor served a number of uses including union hall, movie theater, dance floor, and boxing arena. It also had a pool hall, saloon, and doctor's office. Due to the close proximity of the Rains and Mutual communities, both towns served the same population. Rains retained a post office and school, used by the Mutual dwellers. The Mutual Store, used by residents of both towns, remained in business until 1954. By that date, mining activity had greatly decreased in the western portion of Spring Canyon, and miners could commute from Helper or even Price, obviating the need for immediate facilities, such as the store or company housing.⁷

II. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MUTUAL MINING AREA

In 1985, Desert West Research, Salt Lake City, Utah, conducted a Class III cultural resource survey of the Spring Canyon area, including the Mutual Mine Area. Mutual (420b470), including the Day-Mutual Mine tipple, was considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.⁸

The exact construction date of the Day-Mutual Mine tipple cannot be determined, but is about 1940-1941. The Day-Mutual Mine was a short-term, World War II-era small coal mining operation within the overall Mutual mining Area in the Burnt Tree Fork of Spring Canyon. Although it does not date from the first commercial coal mining period at Mutual, it is considered an integral part of the continuing evolution and overall history of coal mining in this area. There were several other small mining operations nearby, including the Harvey Mine and the Duncan Mine. The nearby Western Mine was the most recent and was the last commercial mining operation in the Mutual mining area. All of these mine developed different portions of the same coal seams. Their above-ground manifestations tend to overlap, and the Mutual Mining Camp and the earlier Morton Mining Camp remnants stand nearby. An old stone blacksmith shop stands near the collapsed portal of the Western Mine, although it dates from the 1920s and was not used by the Western Mine. It is, therefore, difficult and perhaps unwise to separate and isolate these features from one another. All are physical manifestations of the gradual evolution of the Mutual mining area.

The Day-Mutual Mine is an integral part of the history of the Mutual mining area within the greater Spring Canyon coal mining district, the Book Cliffs Coal Field, and the overall history of coal mining in the State of Utah and the western United States. The site therefore has local, state, and regional historical significance. Although the Day-Mutual Mine was a small, short-term coal mining operation, it is a part of the overall Mutual mining area that produced significant

quantities of coal from about 1920 to the early 1960s. The various Mutual mining operations supported a substantial and ethnically divergent work force that shared the facilities of two close communities, Rains and Mutual.

The Day-Mutual tippie is an example of a mine support facility, designed for a particular function and constructed with cheap, locally available materials. It is unlikely that any formal set of building plans were ever drawn prior to construction. The structure represents the ingenuity and practicality of experienced mining men. It fulfills the requirements of a low cost, yet efficient coal storage and loading facility for a small, short-term mining operation. It is similar to its larger, more elaborate wooden counterparts that proliferated throughout the Spring Canyon mining area during the early twentieth century, but have all be torn down or razed. With the exception of the Day-Mutual wooden tippie, only examplss of concrete and metal tipples remain today.

III. SITE DESCRIPTION

Day-Mutual Mine Tippie: Site 42Cb515, Feature 1, Structure S4
(SW/NW/NE/NE Section 12, T13S-R8E, template anchored in SE corner)

The Day-Mutual mine tippie is on the lower southwest slope of the Burnt Tree Fork of Spring Canyon, about one-half mile northwest of the old Rains town site. It is a tall wooden structure consisting of peeled log and wooden timbers. It was constructed on a slope, so that the upper deck was on the same level as the old mine portal. It measures approximately 23 feet in width at the base, 50 feet in height, and 60 feet in length. The upper portion consists of a wood plank deck with a centered slot conforming to the width of the rail tracks, allowing the coal cars to dump coal directly into a funnel-shaped steel hopper below. Portions of the wooden deck have since been removed or have rotted, and the track is no longer in place. The upper deck is supported by vertical peeled logs and horizontal and slanted cross timbers fastened with large metal bolts. A sheet steel hopper supported by timbers was built into the superstructure, so that the coal could be stored and then easily loaded onto waiting coal trucks. It does not appear that the tippie was equipped to sort or screen the coal prior to loading. The lower portion of the tippie has a plank deck, measuring 23 feet by 14 feet. The deck is on the same level as the bottom of the hopper and is supported with 9x18-inch timbers. There is also a poured concrete base to support the hopper. It is no longer evident as to how the coal existed the hopper to be loaded onto the trucks. Presumably, some kind of chute was lowered, an the coal was released by means of a sliding door. There is a level area in front of the tippie to accommodate coal trucks.

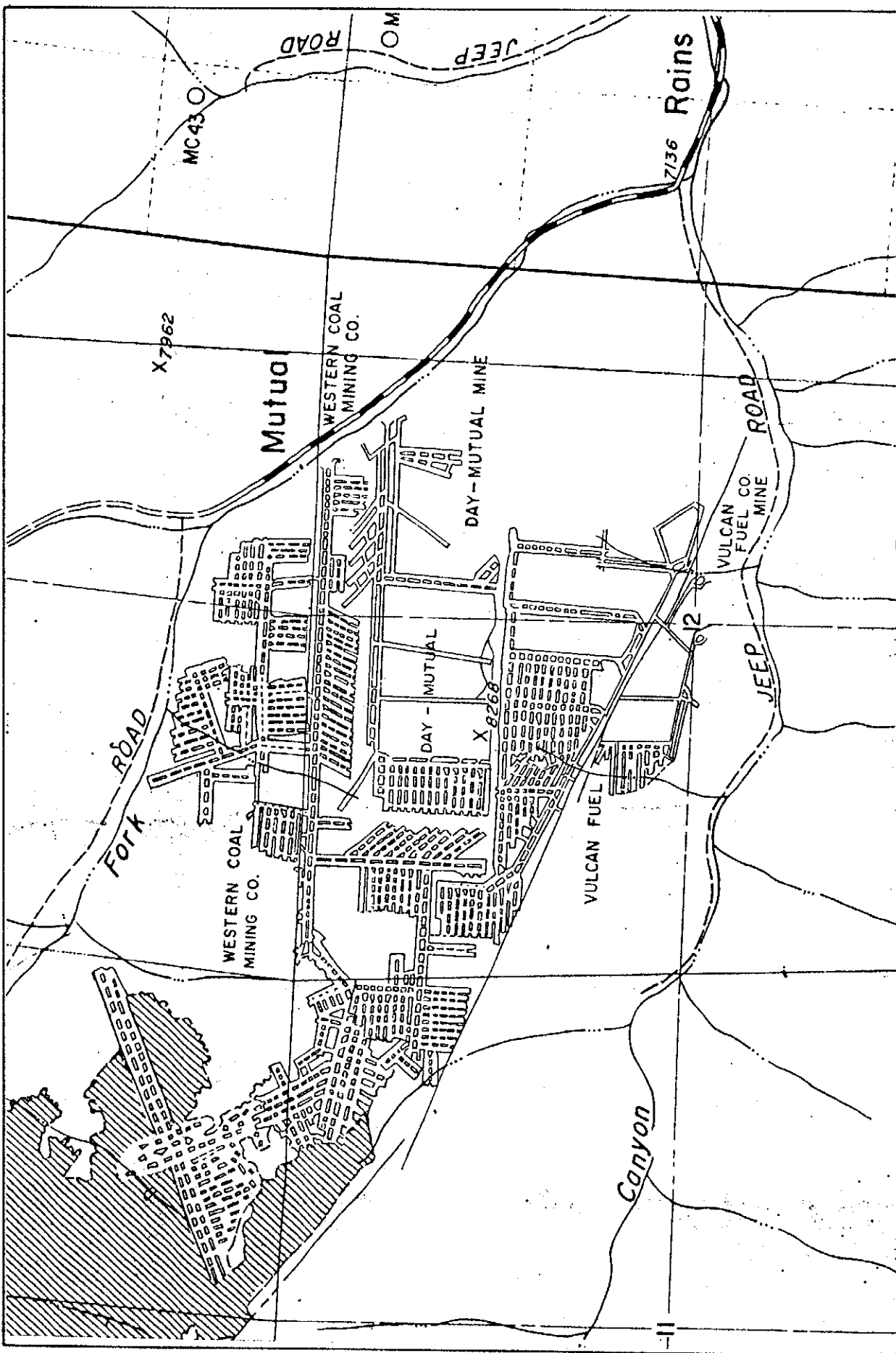
The Day-Mutual Mine tipple is typical of a small independent mine operation. With limited development capital and a small output, mine support facilities were kept simple and functional. They were often built by small crews, using locally-available material. Permanency was not a prime consideration in such an operation. As a result, the Day-Mutual Mine tipple is currently in an advanced state of disrepair and is in danger of collapsing. Several of the main supports on the south side of the structure are completely rotted through. Rock and other materials are gradually creeping downslope and creating additional pressure on main supports.

IV. FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Mutual Coal Company, Mutual Coal Company: An Organization Created to Serve the Interests of the Fuel Consumer (Salt Lake City: Mutual Coal Company, 1925) (Pamphlet); State of Utah, Industrial Commission of Utah, Report of the Mine Inspection Department, 1924, pp. 27-28
- ² Ibid.; C. A. Allen and E. M. Spieker, "Analyses of Utah Coals," U. S. Bureau of Mines Technical Paper No. 345 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1925), p. 54; H. H. Doelling, Central Utah Coal Fields: Sevier, Sanpete, Wasatch Plateau, Book Cliffs and Emery, Monograph Series No. 3 (Salt Lake City: Utah Geological and Mineralogical Survey, 1972), pp. 251, 350.
- ³ State of Utah, Report of the Industrial Commission, State Coal Mine Inspector's Report, 1926, p. 66; 1928, pp. 25, 62; 1930, p. 52.
- ⁴ Allan Kent Powell, The Next Time We Strike: Labor in Utah's Coal Fields, 1900-1933 (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1985), pp. 174-175, 187; State of Utah, Report of Industrial Commission, State Coal Mine Inspector's Report, 1936; 1938.
- ⁵ Doelling, p. 350; State of Utah, Report of Industrial Commission, State Coal Mine Inspector, 1942, 1944, 1946, 1948; Utah Geological & Mineral Survey, Maps of Mined Out Areas, Mutual, Day-Mutual Coal Mines, n.d.; Frank Pugliesi, personal communication, Mutual Mine, August 22, 1987; Dick Schultz, personal communication, Helper, Utah, August 23, 1987; Val Turri, personal communication, Helper, Utah, August 26, 1987.
- ⁶ Schultz, Frank Pugliesi, State of Utah, Report of the Industrial Commission, State Coal Mine Inspector, 1948; Maps of Mined Out Areas.
- ⁷ Frank Pugliesi, Dick Schultz, Chuck Zehnder, A Guide to Carbon County Coal Camps and Ghost Towns (Helper, Utah: n.p., 1984), pp. 26-27.

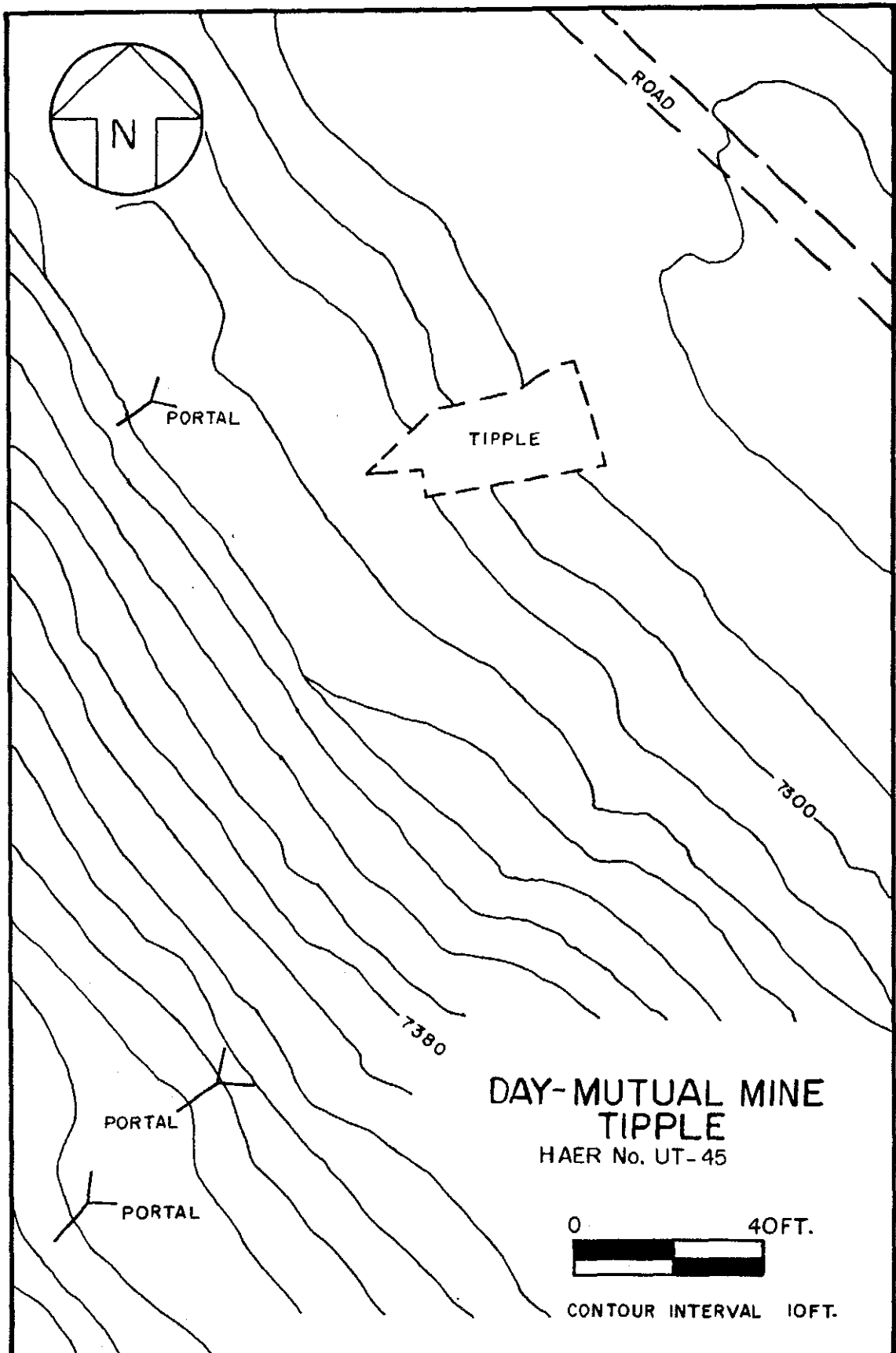
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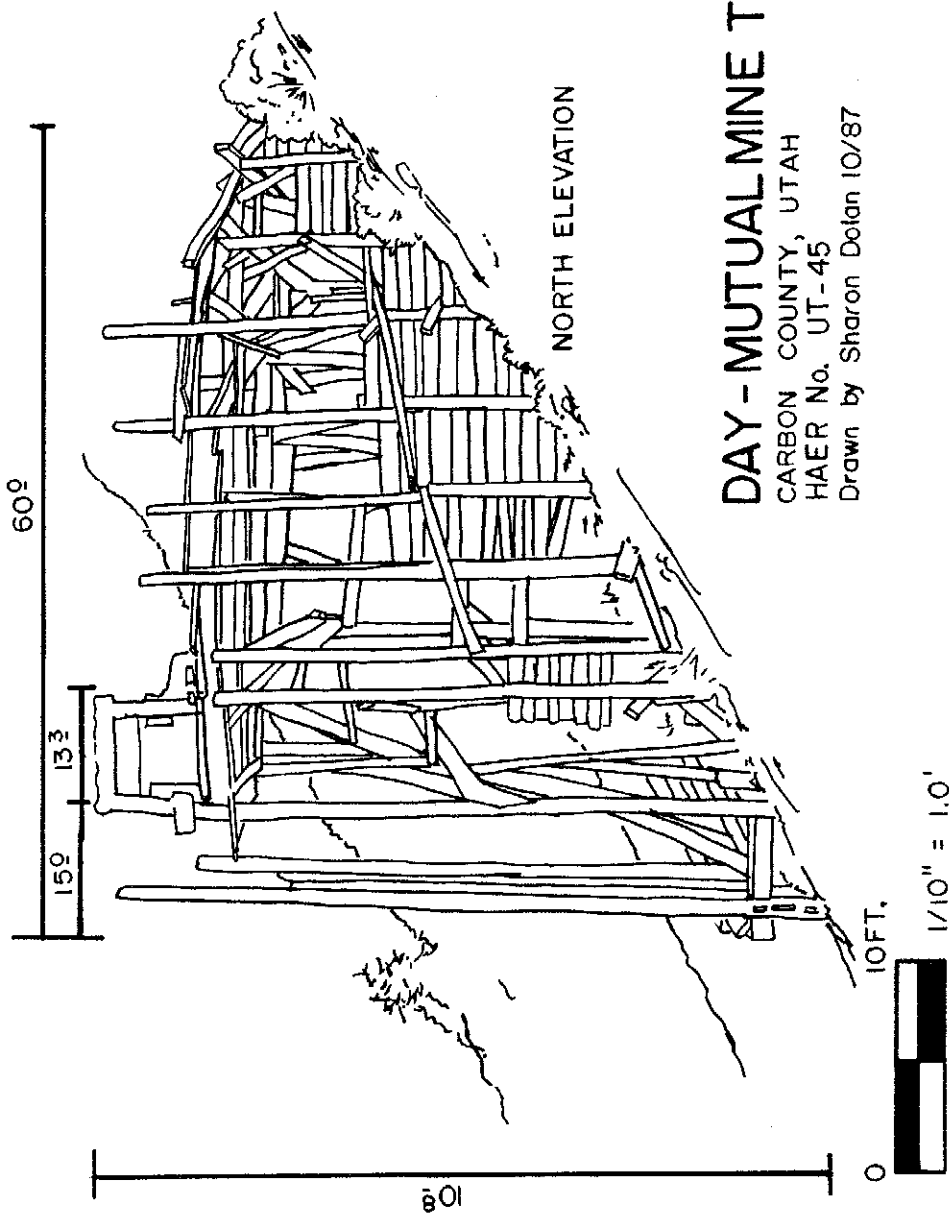
- ⁸ Michael S. Berry, "An Archeological Evaluation of Historic Coal Mining Sites in Carbon County: Spring Canyon, Bear Canyon, Scofield and Gordon Creek Areas," Desert West Research, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1985 (typewritten).



MAP OF MUTUAL MINE WORKINGS

The Day-Mutual Mine worked the same coal deposits as the old Mutual Mines, and filled a small unworked gap between the old Mutual workings and those of the Vulcan Fuel Company Mine to the south in Left Fork of Spring Canyon. (Utah Geological and Mineral Survey, Maps of Mined Out Areas, Mutual, Day-Mutual Coal Mines, n.d.)





DAY-MUTUAL MINE TIPPLES

CARBON COUNTY, UTAH

HAER No. UT-45

Drawn by Sharon Dotan 10/87